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REPORTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF SUBSIDIARY BODIES

Revised guidelines for the review of policies and procedures concerning technical cooperation among developing countries

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the Economic and Social Council at its resumed substantive session of 1997, pursuant to decision 10/2 of the High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, the attached revised version of the guidelines for the review of policies and procedures concerning technical cooperation among developing countries. It was prepared by the United Nations Development Programme.

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Annex

REVISED GUIDELINES FOR THE REVIEW OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES CONCERNING TECHNICAL COOPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

CONTENTS

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	INTRODUCTION	1 - 7	3
II.	DEFINITION, SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES	8 - 10	4
III.	HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	11 - 16	5
IV.	TCDC POLICIES AND PROGRESS MADE SINCE THE ADOPTION OF THE BUENOS AIRES PLAN OF ACTION	17 - 30	6
V.	CONSTRAINTS	31 - 32	10
VI.	THE REVISED GUIDELINES	33 - 45	11
	Overall policy	33 - 34	11
	Financing	35	12
	Data and information	36	13
	Training	37	13
	Focal points	38 - 40	14
	Networking	41	15
	Procedures	42 - 43	15
	Reporting	44 - 45	15
VII.	RECOMMENDATION	46	16

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This revised version of the Guidelines for the Review of Policies and Procedures concerning Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC) has been prepared for submission to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council at its resumed session of 1997, pursuant to decision 10/2 of the High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries at its tenth session.[1]

2. In accordance with the above-mentioned decision, the Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, prepared the revised Guidelines following extensive consultations with the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system, taking into account the experience gained by them in the application of the guidelines previously approved by the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) in 1993. The document is therefore the result of a concerted effort to formulate system-wide guidelines for the purpose of ensuring a coordinated approach to the promotion and application of TCDC by the organizations of the United Nations system.

3. The High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries initiated this review process seven years ago in its decision 7/1 (6 June 1991) in which it recommended that the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) should convene a special meeting of TCDC focal points of the United Nations system in early 1992 in order to prepare guidelines for the review of the policies and procedures on TCDC in the various organizations. In addition, the High-level Committee recommended that the guidelines be reviewed by the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) and be transmitted to the High-level Committee for its consideration and adoption with a view to their subsequent implementation by the organizations concerned.[2] It further recommended that the ACC should monitor the implementation of the guidelines on a regular basis through the meetings of TCDC focal points of the United Nations organizations.

4. The UNDP Governing Council welcomed the decision of the High-level Committee and requested the Administrator to facilitate the implementation of the guidelines in cooperation with other organizations of the United Nations system, and to report to the Council at its fortieth session, in 1993. At its eighth session, held in 1993, the High-level Committee noted with appreciation the guidelines approved by ACC and called upon the organizations of the United Nations system to apply them on an experimental basis.[3]

5. At its tenth session, the High-level Committee took further initiatives to ensure that the guidelines, which had been applied on an experimental basis since 1993, were reviewed and revised as a basis for their more intensive application. Accordingly, in its decision 10/2 of 9 May 1997, the Committee requested the Administrator of UNDP to carry out consultations with the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system and to submit recommendations on the subject to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session, through the Economic and Social Council, for further consideration and approval, with the expectation that recommendations would be submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session in the context of the triennial

policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system.[1]

6. Pursuant to the provisions of decision 10/2 of the High-level Committee, preliminary consultations on the preparation of the revised guidelines were carried out on 12 May 1997, at a meeting of a number of focal points of organizations and agencies of the United Nations system which was convened by the Special Unit for TCDC within UNDP. Although the validity and relevance of the guidelines to the promotion of TCDC were recognized at that meeting, it was agreed that the guidelines would be further revised and updated and that consultations would be held with all agencies and organizations in order to arrive at common agreement on the subject. On 27 June 1997, a draft of the revised guidelines was submitted by the Administrator of UNDP to the heads of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system. Their comments and recommendations have been integrated into the text.

7. The proposals contained in this document are for the most part an affirmation of the Guidelines that had been approved by ACC and subsequently welcomed by the High-level Committee in 1993. However, some revisions have been made in order to make the guidelines more consistent with the strategic orientation and focus of the report on new directions for TCDC,[4] prepared at the request of the General Assembly in 1994,[5] and to incorporate the views expressed by various organizations and agencies of the United Nations system on the subject. Other revisions have their source in policy-related directives issuing from recent decisions and resolutions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the High-level Committee on the Review of TCDC and the UNDP Executive Board.

II. DEFINITION, SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

8. Technical cooperation among developing countries, widely known by the acronym TCDC, is essentially a process whereby two or more developing countries pursue their individual or collective development through cooperative exchanges of knowledge, skills, resources and technical know-how. Ideally, TCDC activities should be initiated, organized and managed by developing countries themselves with their Governments playing a lead role while involving public and private institutions, non-governmental organizations and individuals. TCDC is multidimensional in scope and can therefore include all sectors and all kinds of technical cooperation activities of developing countries, whether bilateral or multilateral, subregional, regional or interregional in character. The challenge is to marshal innovative approaches, methods and techniques that are particularly adapted to local needs without supplanting existing modalities of technical cooperation which have proven useful.

9. The principle objectives of TCDC are spelled out in the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries,[6] adopted at the United Nations Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries in 1978.

10. In essence, the Plan of Action provided the international community with guiding principles for solving the problems faced by developing countries as they sought to tackle the challenges of development in a post-colonial context. The proposals contained in the report on new directions[4] render the Plan more relevant today by providing a package of innovative TCDC approaches in the context of new challenges facing these countries in the wake of current trends towards globalization and liberalization.

III. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

11. The promotion of TCDC has been an important theme in development cooperation for almost two decades, ever since it was given special impetus in 1978 by the General Assembly.[7] The Buenos Aires Plan of Action provides the basic legislative framework for member countries and the United Nations development system.

12. The ultimate goal of TCDC is the promotion of national and collective self-reliance among developing countries, on the one hand, and global interdependence, on the other. In promoting TCDC, developing countries advance their self-reliance through the harnessing and utilization of capacities existing within the countries of the South. To underscore the continued importance of interdependence in international development cooperation, the Plan of Action, emphasizes that TCDC is complementary to - not a substitute for - traditional North/South development cooperation. It assigns primary responsibility to the developing countries for organizing, managing and financing TCDC, but the United Nations development system is expected to play a catalytic and promotional role. The Plan specifically states that the entire United Nations development system must be permeated by the spirit of TCDC and all its organizations should play a prominent role as promoters and catalysts.

13. Given the primary responsibility of the developing countries themselves for TCDC, the role of the United Nations development system is largely supportive of their efforts. Financial and other forms of assistance from the United Nations system are to be regarded as complementary and not as a substitute for the resources and efforts of the developing countries themselves. This position has been endorsed by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU).[8]

14. The continued validity of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action has been repeatedly reaffirmed by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, and by the conferences and governing bodies of many specialized agencies. General Assembly resolution 46/159 states that technical cooperation among developing countries remains a key element in global economic cooperation; in resolution 48/172, the Assembly went further and urged Member States, UNDP and other organizations of the United Nations development system to give high priority and full support to TCDC in their respective fields of competence. In resolution 49/96, the Assembly directed its attention to the articulation of a new vision for TCDC, based on the new challenges facing the developing countries, and therefore requested the High-level Committee to deliberate on specific policies and operational interventions that would enable developing countries to meet the challenges posed by the emerging global economic order. On the basis of that resolution, the Special Unit for TCDC carried out wide-

ranging consultations. It then formulated comprehensive proposals in its report on new directions for TCDC,[4] which was subsequently welcomed by most United Nations organizations, and endorsed by the High-level Committee, the Executive Board of the UNDP, and the Economic and Social Council. In resolution 50/119, the General Assembly also endorsed the recommendations contained in the report and called upon all Governments, relevant United Nations organizations and multilateral financial institutions to consider increasing allocations of resources for economic and technical cooperation among developing countries. TCDC also found strong endorsement in the South Commission report, entitled The Challenge to the South,[5] and in the resolutions of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Labour Organization and the World Health Organization. The Economic and Social Council, in its decision 1992/41, called on all parties in the development partnership to give "first consideration" to TCDC and to review their policies and practices to facilitate the use of TCDC in the design, formulation, implementation and evaluation of programmes and projects supported by them.

15. The overall intergovernmental review of TCDC is entrusted to a high-level meeting of representatives of all countries participating in UNDP. The meeting was renamed the High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries. Within UNDP, the Special Unit for TCDC serves as the secretariat of the High-level Committee, in addition to carrying out other substantive responsibilities for the promotion and implementation of TCDC activities. The General Assembly has consistently endorsed the relevance of the recommendations of the High-level Committee, and has repeatedly underscored the importance of implementing the Committee's decisions as a basis for strengthening TCDC.

16. The High-level Committee meets biennially and has so far reviewed nine progress reports which, among other things, detailed the advances made in implementing the tasks entrusted to the United Nations development system in promoting TCDC. In all reports of the United Nations organizations and agencies to the High-level Committee, the importance of expanding and strengthening TCDC focal points has been recognized.

IV. TCDC POLICIES AND THE PROGRESS MADE SINCE THE ADOPTION OF THE BUENOS AIRES PLAN OF ACTION

17. Resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, and the High-level Committee have contributed to the adoption of a more systematic approach to TCDC within the United Nations development system. In 1980, the High-level Committee, inter alia, invited all Governments of the developing countries that had not done so to establish national focal points or other appropriate mechanisms for technical cooperation among developing countries, in keeping with recommendation 3 of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action. To mark the tenth anniversary of the Plan of Action, the General Assembly, in resolution 44/222, once again called on Governments and the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to implement the recommendations contained in the Plan of Action. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1992/41, reiterated the need for the widespread application of TCDC. In its decision 6/4 of 29 September 1989, the High-level Committee sought to strengthen

TCDC by calling upon developing countries to prepare elaborate directories on the supply and demand of TCDC, including priority areas/sectors, needs and capacities for TCDC. Developing countries were also requested to establish data banks containing information on their national experts, institutions, professional organizations, and local techniques and technologies with a view to utilizing the potential of TCDC in various regions. Further, in its decision 8/2, the High-level Committee adopted a strategy and framework for the promotion and application of TCDC in the 1990s, which was endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 48/172. The strategy recommended, among other things, that high priority should be given to Economic and Social Council resolution 1992/41 in regard to giving "first consideration" to the application of TCDC in the implementation of technical cooperation programmes and projects. More recently, at its ninth session, the High-level Committee adopted the report on new directions for TCDC.[4] The report was endorsed by the UNDP Executive Board, the Economic and Social Council, and the General Assembly. Based on these broad policies, UNDP and other agencies of the United Nations system have also sought to develop a framework of operational guidelines to facilitate the use of TCDC in their programmes and projects.

18. On 2 April 1979, UNDP issued a document entitled "Strengthening the capacity of UNDP to promote and support technical cooperation among developing countries",[10] which outlined measures the programme intended to implement in order to discharge its expanded responsibility to support TCDC. In addition to providing a detailed description of the functions of the Special Unit for TCDC, the document demonstrated UNDP's commitment to the objectives of the Plan of Action. During the fifth programming cycle (1992-1996), UNDP identified TCDC as one of its six programme priorities, and special programme resources were allocated for a wide variety of activities. They included the promotion of TCDC through exercises and subject-specific workshops aimed at matching the needs and capacities of developing countries; the promotion of TCDC through sensitization and information exchange; capacity enhancement for the application of TCDC; support to TCDC by means of studies and evaluations; and support for the launching of projects arising from the exercises matching capacity to needs. During the fifth Programme cycle, the Special Unit for TCDC supported more than 130 interventions globally, in a wide variety of areas of central importance to the developing countries.

19. For the programming period 1997-1999, the UNDP Executive Board has allocated 0.05 per cent of overall programme resources for TCDC. The Cooperation Framework for TCDC, 1997-1999, which was prepared by the Special Unit for TCDC, will serve as the basis for the programming of those resources. The Framework embodies two broad categories of activities in support of TCDC. The first focuses on support for sustainable human development objectives. Projects will deal with poverty eradication, the environment, production and employment, trade, investment and macroeconomic management. The second category involves the promotion of TCDC through policy formulation and coordination, capacity enhancement for the management of TCDC and information support activities.

20. In response to a request made by the High-level Committee at its tenth session, the UNDP Administrator has announced that the TCDC modality will receive "first consideration" in UNDP programming as a corporate policy.

Accordingly, the TCDC modality is to be mainstreamed in all UNDP programmes and projects, and support to TCDC will become one of the core responsibilities of UNDP resident representatives.

21. In their reports submitted to the High-level Committee, United Nations organizations indicate that, in addition to executing specific TCDC programmes and projects, they also promote initiatives designed to integrate the TCDC concept into the activities carried out in their respective fields of competence.[11] They contribute to human resource development and institution-building by supporting the use of experts and technology transfer; networking among institutions and information systems on a regional basis; the exchange of technical information and directories of national institutions; matching of needs and capacities; and support for seminars, workshops and study tours aimed at strengthening technical cooperation among developing countries.

22. Some organizations have more explicit policies on TCDC. The World Health Organization (WHO), for instance, has promoted collaboration between various medical training and research institutions in developing countries in the sharing of knowledge and technical capacities. In addition to preparing a TCDC directory in the health sector, it has participated in technical meetings of senior health experts from developing countries and provided financial support for such meetings. WHO's technical cooperation activities are premised on the principles of equality, sustainability and self-reliance.

23. For the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), TCDC is a central tool in the delivery of its services to member States. Its medium-term plan (1994-1999) accords TCDC high priority, along with the environment and sustainable development, policy advice, people in development and poverty alleviation, and nutrition and food security. The decentralized structure of FAO reinforces and facilitates the permeation of TCDC in practically all spheres of the organization's activities. The use of TCDC experts, intercountry consultations, training and study tours, regional and subregional workshops, support to regional organizations, promotion of technical cooperation networks and the dissemination of information on innovative and best practices are some of the direct means employed by the organization. The FAO agreement on the use of experts on TCDC and technical cooperation among countries in transition (TCCT) has radically transformed the nature of FAO's services to member States. By July 1997, more than 600 such experts had provided much needed technical skill and expertise in key areas within the competence of FAO. The Special Programme on Food Security, another initiative launched by FAO, is using South/South cooperation as an essential element in programme implementation. The World Food Summit, inter alia, called for increased South/South cooperation as a complement to North/South cooperation to promote viable technology transfer and collaborative research and to share investment experiences and best practices.

24. The support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to TCDC and South/South cooperation has been strengthened and updated as a result of the Programme of Action adopted in 1994 by the Conference on Population and Development. At headquarters, an Advisory Group on South/South cooperation and a focal point assist in monitoring relevant TCDC activities.

25. Despite severe budgetary restrictions the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) has maintained a focal point to ensure that both economic cooperation among developing countries and TCDC are promoted as an integral part of its programmes and projects. A multipoint strategy is followed. It emphasizes institutional networking and training at subregional and regional levels, enterprise-to-enterprise cooperation, and increased flow of financial resources for TCDC. Currently UNIDO is focusing on high-impact TCDC activities at the regional and subregional levels, with the principal goal of facilitating the flow of economic and technical assistance from more advanced developing countries to less advanced countries in each region. In this context, UNIDO made an important substantive contribution to the convening of the South-South Conference on Trade, Finance and Investment (San José, Costa Rica, 13-15 January 1997) and is actively implementing seed projects in direct follow-up to the Plan of Action adopted at San José. The activities being promoted involve major development issues and themes such as investment cooperation, transfer of technology, environmentally sustainable development, human resource development, energy and rural development, and small and medium-size industry.

26. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) reports that the mainstreaming of TCDC in its work is in progress, facilitated by its TCDC focal point which also serves as the central unit responsible for the overall policy and coordination of technical cooperation in general. Following UNCTAD's reorganization in 1996, issues pertaining to TCDC receive attention throughout the organization on a cross-sectoral basis.

27. At its Congress held in Seoul in 1994, the Universal Postal Union (UPU) adopted a resolution on the promotion and further implementation of TCDC by the Union and its member countries. UPU has widely disseminated to its regional advisers on technical assistance the documentation and information gathered at the tenth session of the High-level Committee, together with the decisions and guidelines adopted, and has invited them to increase and diversify their efforts relating to the application of TCDC in the implementation of postal assistance projects.

28. In the past, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) has promoted South/South cooperation through a variety of means, including business tours, technology programmes to improve industrial development, and the promotion of small-scale enterprises and studies to gather ideas on fiscal strategies. In addition, joint workshops and other collaborative activities have brought about increased bilateral exchanges between African countries and China, India, Indonesia and the Republic of Korea. More significantly, the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa assigns ECA the lead role in promoting partnership with Africa through South/South cooperation in support of Africa's development. Pursuant to this task, ECA will be undertaking a number of activities in collaboration with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). Those activities will include fostering interregional private-sector linkages, promoting the sharing of experience in regional monetary and trade arrangements in developing countries, and furthering South/South trade information links.

29. ESCAP endeavours to expand TCDC within the context of its work programme, utilizing both its regular budget and extrabudgetary financial resources. For example, project proposals with a strong emphasis on the use of TCDC, aimed at enhancing economic and technical cooperation among developing countries in the Asia and Pacific region, are given priority consideration for funding. ESCAP mobilizes supplementary funds from both donor and cooperating countries to finance the international costs of developing countries' participation in TCDC activities, particularly that of the least developed, landlocked and Pacific island developing countries and of countries in transition to a market economy. ESCAP conducts workshops and seminars-cum-study tours to sensitize TCDC national focal points of the benefits that their countries could accrue through TCDC, including the matching of their training needs with the opportunities available from other developing countries. Furthermore, ESCAP recently entered into a third-country training programme with Singapore in order to enhance TCDC through bilateral arrangements, and efforts are currently under way to conclude such an arrangement with Malaysia.

30. On the whole, there has been a steady and increasing effort in all organizations to move towards increased application of TCDC and programmes of letter quality. A considerable amount of support from the United Nations system for TCDC is focused on institution-building and networking, information support, resource mobilization and the improvement of management capacity. In their effort to facilitate and encourage the TCDC modality, organizations such as WHO, the International Labour Organization (ILO), FAO and UNFPA have decentralized the use of TCDC-related funds to their field offices. Moreover, the United Nations development system is, inter alia, playing a crucial role in assisting developing countries in the establishment, strengthening and maintenance of national TCDC focal points.

V. CONSTRAINTS

31. Recent evaluations of ongoing TCDC activities have highlighted the fact that the potential of TCDC has not been fully realized. In 1989, the High-level Committee, in its decision 6/3, requested the Administrator of UNDP to convene a group of governmental experts to identify clearly the impediments to TCDC and the changes to be introduced, so as to enable the incorporation of TCDC into all programmes and projects financed by the United Nations development system, and to recommend, as far as possible, revisions to the existing rules, regulations and procedures necessary for that purpose by the relevant governing bodies of the technical cooperation agencies of the United Nations system.[12] The main impediments identified by the group of experts at both the governmental level and in the United Nations system fell into six main categories: lack of awareness on the potential of TCDC; lack of information on the usefulness and applicability of TCDC; lack of effective focal points; lack of policies and procedures on TCDC; shortage of funds; and negative attitudes towards TCDC. At the same time, the agencies of the United Nations system identified various difficulties encountered in their promotional and operational activities concerning TCDC.[13]

32. The assessment contained in the report on new directions for TCDC indicates that the multifaceted nature of TCDC poses its own challenges. Because TCDC

involves many actors, its success requires increased linkages between various objectives and activities reinforced with a proper allocation of human and material resources.

VI. THE REVISED GUIDELINES

Overall policy

33. The major changes which have occurred in the international economic system since the 1980s - principally, the globalization of markets and production structures and the movement towards the establishment of a liberalized global trading regime - have accentuated the continued validity and relevance of TCDC as an instrument for assisting developing countries to participate effectively in the newly emerging economic order.

34. The revised guidelines for the review of policies and procedures concerning TCDC require the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to:

(a) Take appropriate measures to improve the incorporation of TCDC into their programmes and projects and to intensify efforts towards mainstreaming the modality into their operational activities for development and encourage other relevant international institutions to undertake similar measures;

(b) Review policies and practices periodically to assess the extent to which they facilitate the use of the TCDC modality, as a matter of first consideration, in the design, formulation, implementation and evaluation of programmes and projects they support or implement;

(c) Focus increasingly on strategic initiatives that are likely to have a major development impact on a large number of developing countries;

(d) Give priority to interventions on development issues and themes that are of special interest to a large number of developing countries in such areas as trade and investment, debt, the environment, poverty alleviation, production and employment, macroeconomic management and policy coordination, education, health, transfer of technology, and rural development;

(e) Promote the increased operational integration between TCDC and economic cooperation among developing countries, by supporting interventions that have the potential of facilitating the achievement of long-term economic development objectives in priority areas such as poverty alleviation, increased production, employment creation and the environment;

(f) Focus on urgent development challenges faced by groups of developing countries;

(g) Identify "pivotal" TCDC countries;

(h) Establish links with non-governmental organizations and the private sector in an effort to promote TCDC;

(i) Promote triangular cooperation arrangements and other funding modalities in support of TCDC activities;

(j) Support developing countries in their efforts to formulate effective TCDC policies and establish institutional arrangements essential to the proper management of TCDC activities;

(k) Assist the least developed countries and small island developing States to gain access to the TCDC Information Referral System (INRES) of UNDP and other development-oriented information networks;

(l) Document and disseminate information on innovative projects and experiences among developing countries;

(m) Promote awareness of the cost-effectiveness and comparative advantage of the TCDC modality;

(n) Collaborate with the Special Unit for TCDC in the on-going process of promoting the mainstreaming of TCDC into the activities of the United Nations system.

Financing

35. The developing countries themselves have primary responsibility for the promotion and implementation of TCDC activities. However, the organizations of the United Nations system should provide strong support to the developing countries through increased UNDP country allocations and programme resources and through the mobilization of additional funds from non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Developed countries and their various funding agencies should be encouraged to support TCDC through triangular arrangements in the following ways:

(a) Developing countries should be encouraged to allocate funds for TCDC from their national budgets;

(b) The possibilities for implementing TCDC projects using UNDP country allocations should be fully exploited;

(c) The existing rules and procedures of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system should be reviewed on an ongoing basis and, where appropriate, expanded in order to give first consideration to TCDC in the formulation of technical cooperation projects. Projects should also include appropriate TCDC budget lines;

(d) Complementarity between UNDP and other agency resources should be further strengthened;

(e) Greater efforts should be made to mobilize additional financial resources for TCDC;

(f) Each organization should endeavour to provide a core budget for its TCDC activities from its regular programme budget. The core budget should cover

support to TCDC focal points, catalytic or promotional activities, and some specific operational activities;

(g) Trust funds and bilateral resources should be mobilized, where possible, for institutional development, networking and twinning arrangements among institutions in developing countries;

(h) Contributions to the Trust Fund for South-South cooperation should be encouraged.

Data and Information

36. A large number of TCDC information systems and data banks have been established by various organizations. Inventories and directories of institutions and facilities in the South have been compiled and compendia of national capacities and needs have been prepared. It is recommended that:

(a) Arrangements should be made for improving, expanding and updating, on a systematic and continuing basis, existing information on capacities, including inventories and directories of institutions;

(b) Arrangements should be made for the periodic review and assessment of the relevance and effectiveness of the information provided in respect of promotional and operational TCDC activities;

(c) Organizations of the United Nations system which establish and maintain information databases in their respective areas of expertise should, where appropriate, make such information available to developing countries through the TCDC Information Referral System;

(d) The least developed countries should be assisted to gain access to the information crucial to their development, including, in particular, access to the TCDC Information Referral System and other international information networks.

Training

37. Existing TCDC-related activities contain significant training components which need to be enhanced by additional activities, such as the following:

(a) There should be regular in-house orientation and awareness seminars on TCDC for the operational staff of various organizations;

(b) The seminars should cover information on approaches, methods and techniques for promoting TCDC; the application of TCDC to specific situations; TCDC operational procedures; cost-effectiveness and comparative advantage of TCDC; procedures for negotiating, concluding and implementing bilateral and multilateral TCDC agreements; the opportunities and challenges engendered by globalization and liberalization in regard to the development prospects of developing countries and the role of TCDC in this context;

(c) TCDC training should be extended to country office staff in respect of the issues cited above;

(d) Where possible, training should be extended to national and sectoral focal points and carried out at the regional, subregional or country levels;

(e) Training materials should be exchanged among organizations, and joint training programmes should be organized;

(f) Agencies should assist in the development of linkages between research and development institutions of developing countries with a view to enhancing the capacity of such institutions to offer training in specialized technological fields on subregional, regional and interregional levels.

Focal points

38. Organizations have adopted various internal mechanisms, mainly through the establishment of agency TCDC focal points, for promoting their TCDC activities. It is important to assign focal points clear terms of reference and, where feasible, to standardize their core functions. It is equally important for them to have access to the senior decision makers in the various organizations.

39. The focal point should, as a general rule:

(a) Assist in the formulation of TCDC policies, strategies and programmes;

(b) Coordinate the promotion, monitoring and reporting of TCDC activities;

(c) Provide advice and information on TCDC to technical units and country offices;

(d) Monitor the management of and utilization of resources allocated for TCDC and assist in the mobilization of additional funds for that purpose;

(e) Identify, design and disseminate innovative TCDC approaches for promotional and operational activities;

(f) Organize training in respect of TCDC;

(g) Analyse and monitor TCDC activities and prepare progress reports;

(h) Liaise with other organizations and agencies of the United Nations system and other organizations on TCDC matters and, as appropriate, perform representational functions in inter-agency and intergovernmental TCDC meetings.

Special Unit for TCDC

40. The Special Unit within UNDP should:

(a) Promote regular coordination and consultation among the TCDC focal points of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system;

(b) Organize annual meetings of the TCDC focal points of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system;

(c) Promote coordinated action between the TCDC focal points of the United Nations system and national and sectoral focal points;

(d) Play a proactive role within the United Nations system in an effort to expand the application of TCDC.

Networking

41. A significant degree of networking has taken place among institutions in developing countries, both at the initiative of the countries themselves and also as a result of the promotional efforts of the organizations of the United Nations development system. This arrangement offers opportunities for the application of innovative approaches to TCDC, especially in implementing long-term development programmes and projects. Appropriate measures should be taken to ensure the full sustainability of TCDC networks. To maximize benefits from networking, United Nations organizations should:

(a) Document and disseminate practices that have the potential for replication;

(b) Intensify their efforts to identify and recruit experts in the South for work in other developing countries.

Procedures

42. All organizations of the United Nations development system need policies and procedures in order to make TCDC an integral part of their programmes and projects, by ensuring, as required by Council resolution 1992/41, that TCDC be given first consideration by member countries and organizations of the United Nations development system; to promote networking and twinning of institutions of developing countries; and to strengthen the role of UNDP country offices and those of other United Nations agencies and Governments in adopting and using TCDC in all country programmes and projects.

43. It will be useful for each United Nations organization to articulate clear criteria and guidelines for the utilization of regular programme budget funds in support of TCDC activities. They should indicate the types of interventions to be financed, formats for proposals, processing arrangements, and approval procedures. These elements should be reflected in the new instructions to be issued by each organization to give effect to the TCDC revised guidelines in paragraph 34 above.

Reporting

44. The organizations and agencies of the United Nations system and regional commissions have been invited by the General Assembly in resolution 50/119 to provide analytical and quantitative data and indicators on all aspects of South-South cooperation, including recommendations for strengthening such cooperation. Among other things, such data are essential for the preparation, by the

Secretary-General, of the biennial report on South-South cooperation, as stipulated in the resolution.

45. In reporting to the High-level Committee, United Nations organizations should provide:

(a) A descriptive account of their activities, indicating promotional and operational initiatives supported by them in respect of TCDC, and an objective assessment of the impact of such activities on developing countries;

(b) Quantitative data reflecting their TCDC programmes and projects, including financial inputs, number of beneficiaries, experts/consultants and/or procurement from developing countries.

VII. RECOMMENDATION

46. It is recommended that the revised guidelines on policies and procedures concerning technical cooperation among developing countries, contained in paragraphs 34-45 above, should be approved by the General Assembly after review by the Economic and Social Council.

Notes

[1] Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 39 (A/52/39), annex I.

[2] Ibid., Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 39 (A/46/39), decision 7/1.

[3] Ibid., Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 39 (A/48/39).

[4] TCDC/9/3.

[5] Resolution 49/96.

[6] Report of the United Nations Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, Buenos Aires, 30 August-12 September 1978 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.78.A.II), chap. I.

[7] Resolution 33/134.

[8] A/40/656.

[9] Oxford University Press, London, 1990.

[10] DP/393.

[11] The examples given are not exhaustive. They merely illustrate the range of activities in the United Nations development system.

[12] Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 39 (A/44/39), para. 15.

[13] DP/1990/77.